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AD CLERUM.

A SERMON

Preached at a VISITATION holden at *GRANTHAM* In the COUNTY and DIOCESS of *Lincolne*, 8. *Octob.* 1641.

By a late Learned PRELATE.

Now Publiſhed by his own Copy.

Sirac. 3. 24.

For many are deceived by their own vaine opinion: and an evil ſuſpicion hath overthrown their Judgment.

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(1)

Matth. 15.9.

But in vain they do worſhip me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

1. OUr Saviour ſometimes forewarneth his Diſciples to *beware of the leaven of the Phariſees*. Which *leaven*, as he expoundeth himſelf, (and he beſt knew his own meaning,)was of two ſorts: the leaven of *hypocriſie*, *Luk.*12. and the leaven of corrupt and ſuperſtitious *doctrine*, *Matth.*16: Wee read *1 Cor.*5. of a third ſort, and that is *the leaven of maliciouſneſs*: which alſo uſually accompanieth the other two. Where any of the three are in abundance, but eſpecially where they all meet and abound, (as in theſe *Phariſees*) it is impoſſible by any care or cunning ſo to keep them hidden, as not to bewray themſelves upon occaſion to an obſerving eye. As you know it is the nature of *leaven*, though it be hidden never ſo deep in a heap of meale, to work up to the top, ſo that a man may certeinly know by

*Luk.*12.1. *Matth.*16.12. *1 Cor.*5.8.

the effects, and be able to say, that there it is. In the storie of this present Chapter, the Pharisees discover all the three; *Malice*, *Hypocrisie*, and *Superstition*. Their *Malice* against Christ, although it appeared sufficiently in this, that their quarrelling his Disciples for eating with unwashen hands was with the intent to bring *an odium* upon him for not instructing them better: yet he passeth it by, without taking any special notice thereof. It may be, for that his own person was chiefly concerned in it. But then the other two, their *Hypocrisie* and *Superstition*, in rejecting the *Commanaments* of God for the setting up of their own *Traditions*; because they trencht so neer and deep upon the honour of God his heavenly Father, he neither would nor could dissemble. But themselves having given him the occasion by asking him the first question. [*Why doe thy Disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders?*] he turneth the point of their own weapon full upon them again as it were by way of *recrimination* not without some sharpnes, do you blame them for that? But *why* then *do you* your selves *also transgres the Commandment of God by your Tradition?* which is a farre greater matter.

Percutit illos atrociore recriminatione. Eras. in Paraphr.

Τὸ πολλῷ μεῖζον ἔγκλημα, *Chrys. Hom. 51.*

2. That is their *Charge*, vers. 3. Which having made good by *one instance* taken from the *fift Commandment*, (more he might have brought; but it needed not; this one being so notorious and so convincing:) he thenceforth doubteth not to call them *Hypocrites* to their faces, and to apply to them a passage out of the Prophet *Esaias* very pat to his purpose

Συμβαίνουσαν εἰς ἀσεβείας. *Chrysost. ibid. Isai. 29. 13.*

purpoſe. Wherein the Prophet charged the people of thoſe times with the very ſame crimes, both of them, whereof theſe Phariſees are preſently appealed: to wit, *Hypocriſie*, and *Superſtition*; Hypocriſie in their *Worſhip*, and ſuperſtition in the *Doctrine*. The *Leaven* whereof, by how much more it *ſwelled* them in their own and the common opinion, making them to be highly eſteemed among men for their outward *preciſeneſs* and ſemblances of holyneſs: by ſo much the more it *ſowred* them towards Almighty God, rendring the whole lump of their ſo *ſtrict Religion* abominable in his ſight. So true is that of our Saviour, *Luk.* 16. *That which is highly eſteemed among men, is abomination in the ſight of God.* Their *Hypocriſie* he putteth home to them in the Verſes before the Text; *Ye Hypocrites, well did Eſaias propheſie of you, ſaying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is farre from me.* That done, he forgetteth not to remember them of their *Superſtition* too: continuing his allegation out of the Prophet ſtill, in the words of my Text, *But in vaine do they wohſhip me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

Ἀκριβεστάτη αἵρεσις. Acts 26.5. Luk. 16.15.

3.

This later verſe I have choſen to entreat of alone at this time: For although *Hypocriſie* and *corrupt teaching* do often go together, as in thoſe *Jewes* whom the Prophet long before reproved, and in theſe *Phariſees* whom onr Saviour here reproveth: yet have I purpoſely ſevered this verſe from the former in the handling, moved thereunto out of a

Ἐν ὑποκρίσει ψευδολόγων. 1 Tim. 4.2.

double consideration. *First*, because *Hypocrisie* lurking more within, we are not able to pronounce of it with such certainty; neither (if we were) have we indeed any good warrant so to doe: as we may of *unsound Doctrines* which lye more open to the view, and are allowed to our examination. *Secondly*, and especially, because hundreds of those my brethren whom I cannot in reason excuse from symbolizing with the Pharisees in *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, (which is the fault reproved in this verse;) I cannot yet in charitie and in my own thoughts, but acquit from partaking with them in (the measure at least of) that their foul *hypocrisie*, wherewith they stand charged in the former Verses.

1 *Thess.* 5. 21.
1 *Joh.* 4. 1.

The Words themselves being one entire proposition; to stand upon the curious dividing of them would be a matter of more ostentation than use: And the *truth* thereof also, when the meaning is once layd open, will be so evident, that I shall presume of your assent, without spending much time in the proof. The main of our business then upon the Text at this time must be *Explication*, *Application*, and *Use*: First the *Explication* of the Words; then the *Application* of the Matter; and lastly some *Corollaries* inferred there from for our Use. Which for your better understanding and remembrance I shall endeavour to do as plainly and orderly as I can.

4. As for the *Words* first. There are three things in them that desire *Explication*: First, what is meant by

by *the commandements of men*; secondly, what it is to *teach* such Commandements for *doctrines*; thirdly, how and in what respect they that teach such doctrines may be said to *worship God in vain*. For the *first*: ἔνταλμα, or ἐντολὴ, a *Commandment*, properly and strictly taken, is an *affirmative precept*, requiring something to be done: the contrary whereof is a *Prohibition* or *negative precept*, forbidding the doing of something. But in the Holy Scriptures, (as in our common speech also,) the word is usually so extended as to comprehend both, (*Prohibitions* also, as well as *Commandements* properly so called.) The reason whereof is, because *Affirmatives*, and *Negatives* do for the most part mutually include and infer the one the other: As in the present case it is all one, whether the *Pharisees* should *command* men to wash before meat, or *forbid* them to eat before they had washed. We call the whole Decalogue the *ten Commandements*, though there be Negative Precepts there as well as Affirmative, yea more Negative than Affirmative. And those Negatives [*Touch not, Tast not, Handle not,*] are called *the Commandements of men*, Col. 2. 22. Which place I note the rather, because the appellation here used, and cited out of *Esai.* 29. according to the *Septuagint* [ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων] are not found any where else in the whole Testament besides in the relation of this storie, save in that one place onely. By the analogy of which 'places, in as much as there is mention made in them 'all as well of *Doctrines*, as of *Commandements*, 'and that in some of them with the Conjunction

Τὰς ἐντολὰς οἶδας, μὴ μοιχεύσῃς, μὴ &c. *Mark* 10. 19. *Luke* 18. 20.

Co-

'Copulative between them; we are warranted to 'bring within the extent of this word, according to 'the *general intention* and ſcope of our Saviour in 'this place, *Doctrinals* as well as *Morals:* that is to 'ſay, as well thoſe that preſcribe unto our *Judg-* 'ments, what we are bound to believe or not to be- 'lieve in matter of *Opinion*; as thoſe that preſcribe 'unto our *Conſciences*, what we are bound to do or 'not to do, in matter of *Practice*. Although the '*ſpecial occaſion* whereupon our Saviour fell into this 'diſcourſe againſt the Phariſees, and *the ſpecial in-* '*ſtance* whereby he convinceth them, do withall 'ſhew, that the Morals do more principally, pro- 'perly, and directly fall under his *particular intention* and ſcope therein. In the full extent of the word then, all thoſe preſcriptions are to be taken for the *Commandements of men*, wherein any thing is by *humane Authority* either *injoyned* or *forbidden* to be *believed* or *done*, (eſpecially to *be done*,) which God in his Holy Word hath not ſo enjoyned or forbid- *Jer. 35. 6.* den. *Jonadab*'s command to the *Rechabites*, that they ſhould not drink Wine, they nor their ſons for ever; and the *Phariſees* tradition here, that none ſhould eat with unwaſhen hands; were both the *commandements of men.*

5. This is clear enough, yea and good enough hitherto, if there were no more in it but ſo. For you muſt obſerve, (or elſe you quite miſtake the *Text*, and the whole drift of it,) that it is no part of our Saviours meaning, abſolutely and wholly to condemne all the *Commandements of men.* For that were to

to cut the ſinews of all *Government* and *Order*, and to overturn *Churches*, *Kingdoms*, *Corporations*, *Families*, and all other both greater and leſſer *Societies* of men: none of all which can be upheld without ſome *poſitive Laws* and Sanctions of mans deviſing. We do not therefore find, that either *Jonadab* was blamed for *commanding* the *Rechabites* not to drink wine; or that they were blamed for *obſerving* his commandement therein. But rather on the contrary that God well *approved* both of him and them, yea and *rewarded* them for their obedience unto that command; though it were a command but of *mans deviſing*, and had no more than a bare *humane Authority* to warrant it. And therefore thoſe men are very wide, that vouch this Text againſt the *Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions* or *Ceremonies* with ſuch confidence, as if they were able with this one Engine to take them all off at a blow: not conſidering, that it is not barely *the Commandments of men*, either *materially* or *formally* taken, (that is to ſay, neither the *things commanded* by men, nor yet *mens commanding* of them;) but it is the *teaching* of ſuch Commandments for *Doctoines*, that our Saviour here condemneth the Phariſees for. What that is therefore, we are next to enquire, διδάσκοντες διδασκαλίας, *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

Jer. 35.18,19.

Abridgm. Linc. p. 44.

In the 29. of *Eſaie*, the ſubſtantives have a Conjunction copulative between them in the Septuagint; and they are read in the very ſame manner and order [ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας] by St. *Paul*, alluding thereunto in *Col.* 2. But in the *Greek Text* in all

6.

all Copies extant both here and in *Mark* 7. where the same Historie is related, they are put without the Conjunction, by *Apposition*, as the Grammarians call it. The meaning is the same in both readings; onely this latter way it appeareth better, and it is in effect this: Whosoever shall endeavour to impose upon the judgments of men, *in credendis*, or in point of *faith*, any thing to be *believed* as a part of Gods holy *truth*; or shall endeavour to impose upon the Consciences of men, *in agendis*, or in point of manners, any thing to be *observed* as a part of Gods holy will, which cannot be sufficiently evidenced so or so to be, either by *expres's testimonie* of the written Word of God, rightly understood and applied, or by clear natural and *necessary deduction* therefrom according to the Laws of true Logical discourse; is guilty more or lesse of that *Superstition* our Saviour here condemneth in the Pharisees, of *teaching for Doctrines the commandments of men.*

Per appositionem. Erasm. Beza.

7. And a fault it is of a large comprehension. It taketh in all *additions* whatsoever, that are made to that absolute and all-sufficient *Rule of Faith and Manners*, which God hath left unto his Church in his *written Word.* In *what kind soever* they are; whether in Opinion, Worship, Ordinance, Injunction, Prohibition, Promise, or otherwise. From *what cause soever* they proceed; whether from credulity, ignorance, education, partiality, hypocrisie, misgoverned zeal, time-serving, or any other. For *what end soever* they may be done; whether those ends be in truth *intended*, or but in shew pretended:

say

ſay it be the glory of God, the reformation of abuſes, the preventing of miſchiefs or inconveniences, the avoiding of ſcandals, the maintenance of Chriſtian liberty, the furtherance of piety, or whatever elſe can be imagined. If they have not a ſufficient foundation in the *ſacred Text*, and yet ſhall be offered to be preſſed upon our *judgments* or *conſciences* in the name of God, and as his Word: they are to be held as *chaffe*, fitter to be ſcattered before the wind, or caſt out to the dunghil, than to be hoarded up in the Garners among the *wheat*; (alas, *what is the chaff to the wheat?*) or as *wood*, *hay*, or *ſtubble*, meeter to become fewel for the Oven or Hearth, than to be coffered up in the treaſurie among *gold*, *and ſilver*, *and precious ſtones*. And he that bringeth any ſuch doctrine with him, let his *piety* or *parts* be otherwiſe what they can be; ſhould he in either of both, or even in both, match not onely the holy *Apoſtles* of Chriſt, but the very bleſſed *Angels* in heaven; yet ſhould we rather defie him as a *Traitor*, for ſetting Gods ſtamp upon his own Bullion, than receive him as his faithful *Embaſſadour*; and ſalute him with an *Anathema* ſooner, than bid him *God ſpeed*. Eſpecially if the doctrine be apparently either *falſe* or *ungrounded*, and yet *poſitively* and *peremptorily* delivered, as if it were the undoubted word and will of God.

Jer. 23. 28.

1 *Cor.* 3. 12, 15.

Gal. 1. 8.

2 *Joh. ver.* 10.

I may not now deſcend to particulars. But thus much it will concern us all to know in the general, That whoſoever teacheth any thing either to be *abſolutely unlawful*, which God hath *not forbidden* in

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his word; or to be *absolutely necessary*, which God hath *not required* in his word: he *teacheth for doctrines the commandments of men*, , and so far forth plaieth the *Pharisees* part in burthening the consciences of Gods people with the *superstitious fansies* of his own brain. But otherwise, the *enjoyning* of something for a time which God hath *not forbidden*, or the *forbidding* of something for a time which God hath *not required*, by those that are endued with lawful Authority in any *Ecclesiastical*, *Political*, or *Domestical* Society; so as the same be not done for *conscience sake* towards God, or with any opinion of *worship*, *merit*, or operative *holiness*, but meerly out of prudential considerations, and for the reasons of *order*, *decency*, *expedience*, or other like respects of *conveniency* and *accommodation*; is a thing no waies justly chargeable with *Pharisaisme*, *superstition*, or to be cryed down and condemned under the name of *will-worship*; nor doth it come within the compass of our Saviours reproof in this place. If *Jonadab* had laid an obligation upon the consciences of the *Rechabites*, *not to drink wine*, by telling them that for *conscience sake* towards God they ought to abstain therefrom; or if the *Jewish Elders* and Governors, leaving the consciences of the people free, had onely made a *Law* under some penalty for decency and cleanlinesse sake, that no man should sit down to meat in publick with *unwashen hands*: to my seeming had *he* then been guilty of this Pharisaical superstition, and *they* free. In brief then to conclude this Enquiry, To lay an obligation

ligation either upon the *judgments* or *conſciences* of men in point of *opinion* or *practice*, which God hath not laid; that, and nothing but that, is to *teach for doctrines the commandments of men.*

We have yet a *third* thing to be enquired of, for the Explication of the words: namely, how and in what reſpect they that teach ſuch doctrines may be ſaid to *worſhip God in vain.* The ambiguity of our Engliſh word *Worſhip*, hath occaſioned many Errors among Divines, and miſ-underſtandings of one anothers words and writings, whereby the diſputes and controverſies about *Worſhip* are become of all other the moſt intricate and perplexed. The *Hebrews*, and the *Greeks* too, have ſundry words, and thoſe of diſtinct notions, and ſignifications: which we in Engliſh, for want of fitter expreſſions, are faine to tranſlate promiſcuouſly by this one word *Worſhip.* The Greek words σεβομαι, λατρεύειν, προσκυνεῖν, and σέβεσθαι, (which is the word here uſed) are all indifferently rendred, *worſhipping.* Here, according to the notion of the Greek word, it properly ſignifieth the performance of ſome religious or devout act, with an intention to honour God thereby. Whereby it appeareth, that theſe *Phariſees* placed a great part of their *Religion* in the obſervation of theſe *Traditions of mens deviſing*; and flattered themſelves with this conceit, that they did God a great deale of *honour* in ſo doing, and that therefore he could not chooſe but be marveilous *well pleaſed* with them for ſo doing. By long accuſtoming themſelves to which-like outward obſervances, they 9.

had almoſt loſt the vigor and *ſoul* of true *Religion*, (which conſiſteth in the inward reverence and devotion of the heart:) and had litle other left than the bare *carcaſe*, or empty *outſide* thereof; and that alſo patcht and pieced up for the moſt part with the deviſes and *inventions of men*.

10. And this our Saviour now telleth them is *VVorſhip in vain*. He ſaith ſo indeed: but hath he any Text for it. The place he citeth is in *Eſaie* 29. 13. where the words according to the Original run but thus, [*Their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men*:] but that it is *vain*, the Prophet doth not there ſay. He doth not ſay it ματαίως, in thoſe very words, according to the *Hebrew*: but the ſcope of the place importeth all that and more. For God there threatneth to puniſh the people for ſuch *worſhip*: which he would not have done, if he had been either *pleaſed* with it, or *honoured* by it. But the very word and all is ſo found, even as our Saviour citeth it [ματαίως σέβονται] in the *Septuagint* there: which being the moſt common and *received Tranſlation* in thoſe dayes, was therefore for the moſt part followed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles in their quotations, eſpecially where it ſwerved not very much in ſenſe from the *Original*. Now a thing is ſaid to be done *in vaine*, when it hath not that wiſhed effect, which the doer intended and expected. Thoſe *Phariſees* then, intending by thoſe ſuperſtitious *will-worſhips* to *honour* God, and hoping to *pleaſe* him therewithall; when their expectations ſhould be ſo far fruſtrated, that God ſhould all on the contrary

trary profess himself *dishonoured* and *displeased* thereby; it must needs be acknowledged that this their *Will-worship* was all *in vain*. Certainly God will reject, what himself hath forbidden: and he hath forbidden, and that both frequently, and with the severest interminations, all manner of *Will-worship* (of this kind, and properly so called) and all *additions* of men unto his holy Word.

In the several parts of the Text thus opened, we may see the full meaning of the whole. God will not approve of, nor accept any *Wit-worship*, or *Will-worship*, forged or devised by man, with an opinion as if it were a necessary part of Gods service; nor allow of any *doctrine*, that tendeth to bind the *Judgments* or *Consciences* of his people further than he hath thought fit himself to bind them by the expresses of his Word. He will, when time serveth, *root out every plant which is not* of his own planting. And when *the day* is come, which *shall declare* (by a fiery trial) *every mans work of what sort it is*: the *gold* and *silver* and *pretious stones* shall abide the fire, and the workman that built with such good stuff *shall receive a* blessed *reward*. But he that buildeth *wood*, or *hay*, or *stubble*; though by the great mercy of God he himself may passe through the fire, and *be saved* (with some difficulty,) so long as he holdeth fast the foundation, which is *Christ* and his merits: yet he shall *suffer losse* in his work however. That shall be sure to *burn* and perish; whatsoever becometh of him. All that *fear* of God is but superstitious and *vain*, that is taught by the Precepts and *Commandments of men*. From

II.

Matth. 15. 12.

1 *Cor.* 3. 12–15

12. From *the Explication* of the Text hitherto, I came now to *the Application* of it. Wherein I doubt not by Gods help, but to make clear to the judgment of any man, that is not either uncapable through *ignorance*, or fore-possessed with *prejudice*, these three things. *First*, that the *Papists* are guilty of the Pharisaical superstition and Will-worship here condemned. *Secondly*, that *the Church of England*, and hir regular and obedient children are not guilty of the same. *Thirdly*, that those *Divines and others* in the Church of *England*, that so undutifully charge her therewithall, are in truth themselves inexcusably guilty of that very crime, whereof they unjustly accuse her.

13. First, for *the Papists*. That they are the right children and successors of the *Pharisees*, no man that rightly understandeth the Tenets of the *Romish Church* but will easily grant; if he shall duly consider what a masse of *humane Traditions* both in point of belief and worship are imposed upon the judgments and consciences of all that may be suffered to live in the visible Communion of that Church, and that with opinion of *necessity* and under paine of damnation. The *Popes Supremacy*, *Worshipping of Images*, *Invocation of Saints and Angels*, *the propitiatory Sacrifice of the Mass*, *Purgatory*, *the seven Sacraments*, *Transubstantiation*, *Adoration of the host*, *Communion under one kind*, *Private Masses*, *forbidding Priests Mariage*, *Monastical Vowes*, *Prayer in an unknown tongue*, *Auricular Confession*. All these, and I know not how many more, are such, as even

even by the confeſſion of their own learned Writers, depend upon *unwritten Traditions* more than upon *the Scriptures*. True it is, that for moſt of theſe they pretend to *Scripture* alſo: but with ſo little *colour* at the beſt, and with ſo little *confidence* at the laſt; that when they are hard put to it, they are forced to fly from that hold, and to ſhelter themſelves under their great Diana *Tradition*. Take away that, it is confeſſed that many of the chiefe Arcicles of their Faith *nutare & vacillare videbuntur*, will ſeem even to totter and reel, and have much adoe to keep up. For what elſe could we imagine ſhould make them ſtrive ſo much to debaſe the Scripture all they can, denying it to be a Rule of Faith, and charging it with *imperfection*, *obſcurity*, *uncertainty*, and many other defects; and on the otherſide to magnifie *Traditions* as every way more abſolute: but meerly their conſciouſneſs, that ſundry of their doctrines, if they ſhould be examined to the bottome, would apeare to have no ſound foundation in the *Written Word*. And then muſt needs wee conclude from what hath been allready delivered, that they ought to be received, (or rather not to be received but rejected) as *the Doctrines and Commandments of men*.

Andradius. *Multò maxima pars Evangelii pervenit ad nos traditione; perexigua literis eſt mandata.* Hoſ. Confeſſ. c. 92. *Egenum elementum.* Hoſius. *Plumbea regula.* Pighius, &c.

Nor will their flying to *Tradition* help them in this caſe, or free them from *Phariſaiſme*; but rather make the more againſt them. For to omit that it hath been the uſual courſe of *falſe teachers*, when their Doctrines were found not to be *Scripture-proofe*, to (a) fly to *Tradition*: do but enquire a little into

(a) *V. Chamier. Tom. 1. Panſtrat. Lib. 9. cap. 16.* Jewels *Defence 2. chapt. 9.*

into the Original and growth of *Phariſaical Traditions*, and you ſhall find that *(b)* one egge is not more like another, than the *Papiſts* and the *Phariſees* are alike in this matter. When *Saduc* (or whoſoever els was the firſt Author of the Sect of the *Sadducees*) and his followers began to vent their peſtilent and Atheiſtical Doctrines, againſt *the immortality of the Soule*, *the reſurrection of the Body*, and other like: the beſt Learned among the *Jewes*, (the *Phariſees* eſpecially,) oppoſed againſt them by arguments and collections drawn from the *Scriptures*. The *Saduces* finding themſelves unable to hold argument with them, (as having two ſhrewd diſadvantages; but *a little Learning*, and *a bad cauſe*;) had no other means to avoid the force of all their arguments, than to hold them preciſely to *the letter* of the Text, without admitting any *expoſition* thereof, or *collection* therefrom. Unleſſe they could bring *clear Text*, that ſhould affirme *totidem verbis* what they denied; they would not yeild. The *Phariſees* on the contrary refuſed (as they had good cauſe) to be tyed to ſuch unreaſonable conditions: but ſtood upon *the meaning* of the Scriptures, as *the Sadduces* did upon *the letter*; confirming the truth of their interpretations partly from *Reaſon*, and partly from *Tradition*. Not meaning by *Tradition* (as yet,) any doctrine other than what was allready ſufficiently conteined in the *Scriptures*; but meerly the Doctrine which had been in all ages conſtantly taught and received with an *Univerſal conſent* among the People of God, as conſonant to the holy *Scriptures* and

(b) *Non malè comparari Phariſæos Catholicis.* Serarius. *apud* Hall. *Serm. on* Matt. 5. 30.

(c) *Sadoc diſcipulus Antiqui Sochæi, author ſectæ Sadducæorum ſecundùm Rabbinos. V. El. Tiſb in* צדוק; *Schindler. in Lexic. Pentagl. Sed hoc ut commentum Rabbinicum exigit Montacutius: qui Sadducæorum originem ad Doſitheum quendam refert, ex authoritate Epiphanii & aliorum; eoſque Sadducæos dictos confirmat a* צדק *Juſtitia, ob mores auſteros, & in judiciis ſeveritatem. V. Montacut. Appar. 7. §. 49.*

and grounded thereon. By this means, though they could not satisfie *the Sadduces*, (as Heretikes and Sectaries commonly are obstinate) yet so farre they satisfied the generality of the people, that they grew into very great esteem with them, and within a while carryed all before them: the detestation of the *Sadduces* and of their loose errors also conducing not a little thereunto. And who now but the *Pharisees?* and what now but *Tradition?* in every mans eye and mouth. Things being at this passe, any wise man may judge, how easy a matter it was for men so reverenced as the *Pharisees* were, to abuse the credulity of the people and the interess they had in their good opinion, to their own advantage: to make themselves *Lords* of the peoples faith, and by little and little to bring into *the VVorship* whatsoever doctrines and observances they pleased; and all under the acceptable name of *the Traditions of the Elders*. And so they did, winning continnally upon the people by their cunning and shewes of Religion, and proceeding still more and more, till the *Jewish Worship* by their means was grown to that height of *superstition* and *formality*, as we see it was in our Saviours dayes. Such was the beginning, and such the rise, of these *Pharisaical Traditions*.

τοσαύτην ἔχουσι τὴν ἰσχὺν παρὰ τῷ πλήθει, ὡς — &c. *Joseph.* 13. *Antiqu.* 18.

Δευτερώσεις. *Epiphan. in Ptolom. Justinian. Novel.* 146. *& alii.*

Δῆλον ὅτι πολλὰ ἐκαινοτόμουν. *Chrys. Hom.* 51. *in Matt.* 15.

Popish Traditions also both came in and grew up just after the same manner. The Orthodox Bishops and Doctors in the antient Church, being to maintain the *Trinity* of Persons in the Godhead, the *Consubstantiality* of the Sonne with the Father, the

Hypoſtatical Union of the two Natures in the perſon of Chriſt, the Divinity of *the Holy Ghoſt*, and other like Articles of the Catholike Religion, againſt the *Arians*, *Eunomians*, *Macedonians*, and other Heretikes: for that the words *Trinity*, *Homoüſion*, *Hypoſtaſis*, *Proceſſion*, &c. (which for the better expreſſing of the Catholike ſenſe they were forced to uſe) were not *expreſſely* to be found in *the holy Scriptures*; had recourſe therefore very often, in their writings againſt the Heretikes of their times, to *the Tradition of the Church*. Whereby they meant not (as the Papiſts would now wreſt their words,) any *unwritten doctrine* not conteined in the Scriptures, but the very doctrine of *the Scriptures* themſelves, as they had been conſtantly underſtood and believed by all faithfull Chriſtians *in the Catholike Church* down from the Apoſtles times till the ſeveral preſent ages wherein they lived. This courſe of theirs, of ſo ſerviceable and neceſſary uſe in thoſe times, gave the firſt occaſion, and after-riſe, to that heap of *Errors* and *Superſtitions*, which in proceſſe of time (by the power and policy of *the Biſhop of Rome* eſpecially) were introduced into the Chriſtian Church under the ſpecious name and colour of *Catholike Traditions*. Thus have they troden in the ſteps of their forefathers *the Phariſees*: and ſtand guilty even as they of the *Superſtition* here condemned by our Saviour, in *teaching for doctrines mens Precepts*.

Mox ſubſecuta eſt corruptela *Calvin. in loc.*

16 But if the *Church of Rome* be caſt, how ſhall the *Church of England* be quit? That ſymbolizeth

ſo

ſo much with her in many of hir *Ceremonies*, and otherwiſe? What are all our *croſſings*, and *kneelings*, and *duckings*? What *Surplice*, and *Ring*, and all thoſe other Rites and Accoutrements that are uſed in or about the *publike Worſhip*; but ſo many *Commandments of men*? For it cannot be made appear (nor truly do I think was it ever endeavoured,) that God hath any where commanded them. Indeed theſe things have been objected heretofore, with clamour enough; and the cry is of late revived again with more noiſe and malice than ever, in a world of *baſe and unworthy Pamphlets*, that like the *frogs of Ægypt* croake in every corner of the Land: And I pray God the ſuffering of them to multiply into ſuch *heaps* do not cauſe *the whole Land* ſo *to ſtink* in his noſ-thrills, that he grow weary of it and forſake us. But I undertook to juſtifie *the Church of England* and hir regular and obedient children in this behalf: and it will be expected I ſhould do it. If any of the Children of this Church in their too much haſt have over-runne their Mother; that is, have buſied themſelves and troubled others with putting forward new Rites and *Ceremonies*, with ſcandal, and without Law: or by uſing hir name without hir leave for the ſerving of their own purpoſes have cauſeleſſely brought an evil ſuſpicion upon her (as ſome are blamed) let them anſwer it as well as they can: it is not my buſineſſe now to plead for them, but to vindicate *the Church of England* againſt another ſort of men, who have accuſed her of *Superſtition* unjuſtly. *Exod.*8.14.

17 Set both theſe aſide; and hir defenſe is made in a word, if we do but remember what hath been allready delivered in the *Explication* of the Text: to wit, that it is not *the commandments of men*, either *Materially* or *Formally* taken; but the *Opinion* that we have of them, and *the teaching* of them *for Doctrines*, wherein Superſtition properly conſiſteth. *Materially* firſt. There is no Superſtition either in *wearing* or in *not wearing* a Surplice, in *kneeling* or in *not kneeling* at the Communion, in *croſsing* or in *not croſſing* an infant newly baptized: even as there is no ſuperſtition in *waſhing* or in *not waſhing* the hands before meat. So long as neither the one is done with an opinion of *neceſsity*, nor the other *forborn* out of the opinion of *unlawfulneſs*. For ſo long the conſcience ſtandeth free. The Apoſtle hath ſo reſolved in the very like caſe: That neither *that eateth* is the worſe for it, nor *he that eateth not* the better for it. A man may eat, and do it with a good conſcience: and he may *not eat*, and do that with a good Conſcience too. As in the preſent caſe, at this time it is certain Chriſts diſciples did eat and *waſhed not*: it cannot be doubted, but at ſome time or other they *waſhed* before they ate. Not for conſcience ſake towards God either; but even as they ſaw it fit, and as the preſent occaſion required: and they might do both without *ſuperſtition*. But if any man ſhall *wear*, or *kneel*, or *croſſe*, with an opinion of *neceſsity* and *for conſcience ſake* towards God, as if thoſe parts of Gods ſervice wherein thoſe Ceremonies are uſed in our Church could not be right-

1 *Cor.* 8.8.

ly

ly performed without them, yea although the Church had not appointed them; doubtleſſe the *uſe* of thoſe Ceremonies by reaſon of ſuch his opinion ſhould be *Superſtition to him.* Becauſe a man cannot be of that *Opinion*, but he muſt believe it to be *true doctrine*, that ſuch and ſuch *Ceremonies* are of themſelves *neceſſary* parts of Gods worſhip. As on the contrary, if any body ſhould refuſe to *weare*, or *kneel*, or *croſſe*, out of an opinion of their *unlawfulnes*; as if thoſe Ceremonies did vitiate the whole act of that worſhip whereunto they are applied: I cannot ſee, but upon the ſame ground, and by reaſon of ſuch his opinion, the *refuſal* of thoſe Ceremonies ſhould be *to him* alſo *Superſtition*. Becauſe a man cannot be of that *opinion*, but he muſt believe this to be *true doctrine*, that ſuch and ſuch Ceremonies are of themſelves *unlawful* to be uſed in the Worſhip of God. But the obedient children of the *Church of England*, having no ſuch opinion either of the *neceſſity* or *unlawfulnes* of the ſaid *Ceremonies*; but holding them to be (as indeed they are) things in their own nature indifferent: are even therefore free from *Superſtition* in both the kinds aforeſaid. So then in the things commanded taken *materially*, that is to ſay, conſidered *in themſelves* without reſpect to the Churches command, there is no *Superſtition:* becauſe there is nothing concerning them *doctrinally* taught either the one way, or the other.

Now if we can as well clear theſe things taken alſo *formally*, that is to ſay, conſidered not in themſelves, but *as they ſtand commanded* by publick authority 18.

thority of the Church: the whole buſineſſe is done, as to this point. Nor is there in truth any great difficulty in it, if we will but apprehend things aright. For although the very *commanding* them do ſeem to bring with it a kind of *neceſſity*, and to lay a tye upon the *Conſcience*, (as that of St. *Paul* implieth both, *you muſt needs be ſubject*, and that *for conſcience ſake*:) yet is not that any tye brought upon the Conſcience *de novo* by ſuch *command of the Church*: onely that tye that lay upon the Conſcience before, by virtue of that general *Commandment of God* of obeying the higher powers in all their lawful Commands, is by that *Commandment of the Church* applied to that particular matter. Even as it is in all Civil Conſtitutions, and humane poſitive Laws whatſoever. And the *Neceſsity* alſo is but an *Obediential*, not a *Doctrinal* neceſſity. But the Text requireth a *Doctrinal neceſſity*, to make the thing done a vain and ſuperſtitious worſhip [*Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*] Which the *Church of England* in preſcribing the aforeſaid Ceremonies hath not done; nor by her own grounds could do. For look as the caſe ſtandeth with private men for *doing*, or *refuſing*: even ſo ſtandeth the caſe with publick Governours for *commanding* or *forbidding*. As therefore with private men, it is not the bare *doing* or *refuſing* of a thing, as in diſcretion they ſhall ſee cauſe; but the *doing* of it with an opinion of *Neceſsity*, or the *refuſing* of it with the opinion of *Unlawfulneſs*, that maketh the *Action ſuperſtitious*, as hath been already ſhewed: So with publick

Rom. 13. 5.

publick Governours, it is not the *commanding* or *forbidding* of a mutable Ceremony, as for the preſent they ſhall deem it fit, for *order*, *decency*, or *uniformities* ſake, or ſuch other like reſpect: but the *commanding* of it with an opinion as if it were of *perpetual neceſſity*, or the *forbidding* it with the like opinion as if it were *ſimply unlawful*, that maketh the *Conſtitution ſuperſtitious*.

Now I appeal to any man, that hath not run on madly with the cry for company, but endeavoured with the ſpirit of *Charity* and *Sobriety* to ſatisfie his own underſtanding herein; if the *Church of England* both in the (*a*) Preface before the Book of *Common Prayer*, and in the (*b*) *Articles* of her Confeſſion, and in ſundry paſſages in the *Homilies* occaſionally (and theſe Books are acknowledged her moſt Authentick writings, the *two former* eſpecially, and the juſt ſtandard whereby to meaſure her whole *Doctrine*:) if, I ſay, ſhe have not in them all, and that in as plain and expreſſe terms as can be deſired, diſclaimed all *humane Traditions*, that are impoſed upon the conſciences of Gods people either in point of *Faith* or *Manners*; and declared to the world, that ſhe challenged no *power* to her ſelf to order any thing by her own authority but onely *in things indifferent*, and ſuch as are not repugnant to the word of God; and that her *Conſtitutions* are but for order, comelineſſe, and uniformity ſake, and not for conſcience ſake towards God; and that therefore any of thoſe her *Orders* and *Conſtitutions* may be *reteined*, *aboliſhed*, or *altered* from time to time, and

19.

(a) *The Ceremonies that remain are reteined for diſcipline and order, which, upon juſt cauſes, may be altered and changed, and therefore are not to be eſteemed equal with God's law.* Preface, of Cerem.

(b) *The Church hath power to decree rites and Ceremonies, ..but it ought not beſides the Scripture to enforce any thing to be believed for neceſſity of ſalvation.* Artic. 20. *Every particular or National Church hath authority to ordain, change, and aboliſh Ceremonies &c.* Art. 34.

and at all times, as the Governours for the time being ſhall judg to ſerve beſt unto Edification. What ſhould I ſay more? If men liſt to be contentious, and will not be ſatisfied, who can help it? yet thus much I dare ſay more. Let any *Papiſt* or *Preciſitian* in the world give inſtance but in any one ſingle thing, doctrinally maintained by the *Church of England*, which he can with any colour of truth except againſt as a *Commandment of men*: if we do not either ſhew good warrant for it from the *written word* of God, (which we doubt not but to be able to do, and is moſt *ad rem*;) or elſe (which is enough *ad hominem*) for every *ſingle* inſtance they ſhall bring, return them *ten* of their own teaching, every whit as liable to the ſame exception as that: we will yield the Bucklers, and confeſſe her guilty.

20. But now what will you ſay, if after all this clamouring againſt *Engliſh-Popiſh Ceremonies*, (as of late they have blaſoned them,) they that keep all this adoe prove in the end the guilty perſons themſelves? I am much deceived if it do not clearly prove ſo: if we either compare her doctrine and theirs together, or take a view of ſome of theirs by themſelves. *Firſt*, compare them a litle, which will alſo adde ſome confirmation to the former point for the farther juſtifying of the *Church of England* in this behalf. And for example and perſpicuity ſake, let the inſtance be *kneeling at the Communion*; there being the like reaſon of all the reſt. I pray you conſider well the *evidence:* weigh the grounds, and obſerve the courſe held on both ſides, and then give *ſentence* according

Τὰ γὰρ πράγματα ἀπὸ συγκρίσεως μάλιστα φαίνεται. Chryſoſt. Orat. 2. contr. Judæos.

accordingly. If, as God hath given those *our Church Governours* power to determine of indifferent mutable circumstances, and they using the liberty of the Power given them, have appointed *kneeling* rather than *sitting* or *standing*, as judging it a gesture of greater *reverence* and well becoming our *unworthinesse*, but without any opinion either of the *necessity* of that gesture, or of the *unlawfulnes* of the other two; so God had given the like Power to these our *Brethren*, and they using the liberty of that Power had appointed *sitting* or *standing* rather than *kneeling*, as judging either of them a more *proper Table gesture* than it, yet without any opinion of their *necessity*, or of the *unlawfulnesse of kneeling*; the case had then been alike of both. These had been as free as they; neither of them had been guilty of Superstition, in *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men:* because there was no *doctrinal necessity*, whereby to bind the conscience of Gods people on either side. Again, if as these say to their Proselytes peremptorily in effect thus [*you are bound in conscience not to kneel*; it is an unlawful gesture, a superstitious relique of Popery, and carrieth with it a shrewd appearance of their idolatrous Bread-worship; *and therefore we charge you upon your consciences not to kneel:*] so our Church-governors should say to the people peremptorily in effect thus, [*you are bound in conscience to kneel*, or else you profane the holy Sacrament, not discerning the Lords Body; *and therefore we charge you upon your consciences to kneel:*] the case of both had here also been alike.

Both alike guilty of Superſtition, *in teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*: becauſe by that *doctrinal neceſsity* as well the one ſort as the other had laid a perpetual obligation upon the Conſciences of men, in a matter which God having not any where either *commanded* or *forbidden* hath therefore left free and indifferent. But now taking the caſe as *de facto* it is, without *Ifs* and *Ands*, ſet the one againſt the other, and make the compariſon right: and here it is. Our *Brethren* having no publick *authority* given them to order what ſhall be done or not done in matters of *external government*, do yet bind the conſciences of Gods people, by *teaching* that which they thus forbid to be ſimply and in it ſelf *unlawful*. Our *Governors* on the contrary, though having publick *authority* to preſcribe in ſuch matters, do yet leave the conſciences of men at liberty, without teaching that which they appoint, to be of abſolute *neceſſity* in it ſelf. This being *ſpecies facti*, as the Civilians ſpeak, the even true ſtate of the caſe: ſay now I beſeech you in good ſooth, and be not partial, *Quid Furis?* At whoſe door lieth the *Superſtition*? The one ſide teaching no ſuch doctrine, but having *authority*, do by virtue of *that authority* appoint the people to *kneel*; The other ſide having no ſuch authority, but teaching a *doctrine*, do by virtue of *that doctrine* charge the people *not to kneel*: Whether of both ſides may rightlier be ſaid to *teach for doctrines the Commandments of men?*

Tu quum ſis quod ego, & fortaſſis nequior—

Their

Their guilt herein will yet farther appear, if leaving compariſons, we take a view of ſome of their *doctrines* by themſelves. I ſay, but ſome of them: for how many hours would ſerve to reckon them all? or who indeed (even of themſelves) knoweth them all? There are ſo many Covies of *new doctrines* ſprung up ever and anon, eſpecially in theſe late times of connivence and licentiouſneſs; which by that they are well hatcht, preſently fly abroad the Countrey, and are entertained by ſome or other for as good Divinity, as if they were the undoubted Oracles of the Holy Ghoſt. I dare not affirme it, becauſe I will not put my ſelf to the trouble to prove it, and becauſe I heartily deſire and wiſh I be deceived in it: yet I cannot diſſemble my fear that it is but too true, (by the proportion of what we almoſt daily hear or ſee,) that within little more than this *one twelvemonth* laſt paſt there have been more falſe and *ſuperſtitious doctrines* vented in the *Pulpits* and *Preſſes* in England, than have been (in ſo open and daring a manner) in the whole ſpace of *almoſt fourſcore years* before, I mean ſince the firſt of *Queen Elizabeth* of bleſſed memory. And to make good the former charge, omitting ſundry other their unwarrantable poſitions, partly concerning *Church-Government*, Orders, and Ceremonies eſtabliſhed by *Law*, partly concerning ſundry received *cuſtoms* in matters wholly or in part *Eccleſiaſtical*, partly concerning the uſe of ſundry *paſtimes* and *recreations*, partly concerning ſundry *uſages* and *cuſtoms in vita communi* in things meerly Civil, and 21.

not sacred or Ecclesiastical, the particulars whereof would amount to many scores, if not hundreds: I shall present unto your view a *dozen* onely, which I have selected from the rest of those that I have observed to have been most urged of late in *Sermons* and *Pamphlets*; by which you may in part judge of the rest. And they are these

22. 1. First, that the appointing of a *set forme of Prayer* or Liturgy, to be used in the service of God, is unlawful or Antichristian: or that it is a straitning or limiting of the Holy Spirit of God.

2. That it is not in the power of the Church to ordain any *Rites* or *Ceremonies* in the service of God, which the people are bound to observe, other than such as God hath commanded in his Word.

3. That *Rites* and *usages*, devised or abused either by *Heathens* or *Idolaters*, may not be lawfully used by Christians in the service of God.

4. That it is unlawful or superstitious to *kneel at the holy Communion*, in the act of receiving the Sacrament.

5. That *Instrumental Musick* may not be used in the service of God, as well as *Vocal*.

6. That *Episcopacy is Antichristian*, or repugnant to the Word of God.

7. That the *Presbyterian discipline* is the very *Scepter of Christs Kingdom*; or the order appointed by Christ himself for the perpetual Government of his Church, which ought of all

all particular Congregations to be inviolably observed unto the Worlds end.

That the observation of Annual Festivals in memory of Christ or his Apostles, as Christmas, Easter, *&c.* is Antichristian, superstitious, and unlawful.

8. That it is simply unlawful for a Minister to be possessed of *two Benefices*.

9. That *Ecclesiastical persons* may not meddle in *secular affairs*; nor can with a good conscience exercise any *Civil office or Jurisdiction*, although by humane authority, Law, or custome allowed them.

10. That it is not lawful in *preaching Gods word*, to recite sentences out of *the Fathers*; much lesse from the writings of *Heathen Writers*.

11. That the *Election or consent of the people* is of necessity required, either to the *ordeining* of Ministers, or to the appointing of them to their particular charges.

12. Lastly, (which though I find not positively delivered *in terminis*, nor is the danger thereof so generally observed, as of sundry of the former; yet for that I find it often touched upon in these late Treatises, and conceive it to be an *Errour* of no lesse dangerous consequence than many of the former, I thought meet not to omit it:) That the *Examples of Christ and of his Apostles* ought to be observed of all Christians, as a *perpetual Rule* binding them to *Conformity*, even as their *Precepts* doe unto *Obedience*.

23. Con-

23. Concerning which *Poſitions*, I do here in the face of this Congregation take God to witneſs, who ſhall judge us all at the laſt day, that I do verily believe, and in my conſcience am perſwaded, that all and every of them are the vaine and *ſuperſtitious inventions* of men, wholy deſtitute of all ſound warrant from the *Written Word* of God rightly underſtood and applied: and (till they ſhall be better proved) ought to be ſo eſteemed of every man that deſireth to make Gods Holy Word the rule of his opinions and actions. Many and great are the *miſchiefs* otherwiſe, that come to the Church and people of God, by the *teaching* of theſe and other like *groundleſs Poſitions*: As amongſt others theſe *three* following. *Firſt*, great ſcandal is hereby given to *Atheiſts*, *Papiſts*, *Separatiſts*, and other the enimies of our Religion; eſpecially to the *Papiſts*: who will not onely take occaſion thence to ſpeak evil of us and of *the way of truth and holineſs* which wee profeſs, but will be themſelves alſo the more confirmed in their own wicked errors, by objecting to us, that ſince we left them, we cannot tell where to ſtay. *Secondly*, many ſober and godly men, both Miniſters and others, who cheerfully ſubmit to *the eſtabliſhed Lawes* and Government, (as they take themſelves by *the Law of God* bound to doe, in things which they believe not to be repugnant to his Word) are by this means unworthily expoſed to contempt and miſcenſure, as if they were *time-ſervers*, or inclined to *Popery* or *Superſtition* at the leaſt. But if they ſhall farther

farther endeavour in their Sermons or otherwiſe, to ſhew their juſt diſlike, and to hinder the growth, of theſe *unlawful impoſitions*, and to hold the people in their good beliefe by inſtructing them better; they ſhall be ſure to be forthwith branded as *oppoſers of the Goſpel.* As if there were ſuch *a ſpirit of Infallibility* annexed to ſome mens *Pulpits*, as ſome have ſaid there is to the *Popes Chaire*, that whatſoever they ſhall deliver thence muſt needs be *Goſpel*. *Thirdly*, hereby many an honeſt-hearted and well-meaning Chriſtian is wonderfully abuſed: by being miſ-led into *Error*, *Superſtition*, and *Diſobedience*; by having his conſcience *brought into bondage* in thoſe things, whereunto it was the good pleaſure of God to leave him free; and by being diſpoſed to much *uncharitableneſſe* in judging evil of his brother, that hath given him no juſt cauſe ſo to doe.

Beſides theſe and ſundry other *miſchiefs* of dan- 24.
gerous conſequence, too long now to repeat: the thing that I am preſently to affirme, concerning all and every of the *poſitions aforeſaid* and other like them, pertinently to the Text and buſineſs in hand, is this, That whoſoever ſhall *doctrinally* and poſitively *teach* any of the ſame, doth *ipſo facto* become guilty of the *Superſtition* here condemned by our Saviour, and ſo farre forth ſymbolizeth with the Phariſees in *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* And I doubt not, but there are in the *Church of England* ſundry learned judicious and *Or-*

thodox

thodox Divines, no way ſuſpected of favouring *Popery or Popiſh Innovations*, that by Gods help and the advantage of Truth will be ready to maintaine what I now affirme, in a fair Chriſtian and Scholar-like trial, againſt whoſoever are otherwiſe minded, whenſoever by authority they ſhall be thereunto required.

25. I have now finiſhed what I had to ſay from this Scripture by way of *Application*. From the whole premiſſes would ariſe ſundry *Inferences*, as Corollaries and by way of *Uſe*. In the proſecution whereof, had we time for it, I ſhould have occaſion to fall upon ſome things that might be of right good uſe for the ſetling of mens *judgments* and *conſciences* in a way of *Truth* and *Peace*. And truely my aime lay chiefly here, when my thoughts fixt upon this Text. But having enlarged my ſelf ſo far beyond my firſt purpoſe allready, I ſhall onely give you a ſhort touch of each of them: and it may be hereafter (as I ſhall ſee cauſe, and as God ſhall diſpoſe,) I may take ſome other occaſion, here or elſwhere, to enlarge them further.

26. The *firſt* ſhould be an *earneſt requeſt* to ſuch of my Brethren, as through inconſideration, zeale againſt Popery or profaneneſſe, or any other cauſe, have been a little too forward and faulty this way. That they would in the fear of God *review* their own *dictates*, and (all *partiality* and ſelf-ſeeking laid aſide) beſtow a little paines to *examine* throughly the ſoundneſs of thoſe *principles* from which they draw

draw their *concluſions*: whether they be the very *true word* of God indeed, or but the fanſies and devices of the wit of man. I know how loathly men are induced to ſuſpect themſelves to be in an Errour: and that it is with our brethren herein as with other men, may ſufficiently appeare in this, that few of them will ſo much as beſtow the reading of thoſe books, that might give them ſatisfaction. But (beloved) better *try your own work* your ſelves, and if it prove but *hay* or *ſtubble* burn it your ſelves, by acknowledging your errour and retracting it; that you may build better: than let it lye on ſtill, till a ſorer fire catch it. Better for any of us all, whether in reſpect of our *errours* or *ſins*, to prevent the Lords judging of us, by timely *judging our ſelves*, than to ſlack the time till his judgment overtake us. 1 Cor. 11. 31.

The *ſecond uſe* ſhould be an *Admonition* to all my Brethren of the Miniſtery for the time to come, and that in the Apoſtles words, 1 *Cor.* 3. 10. *Let every man take heed what he buildeth.* St *Paul* himſelf was very careful this way, not to *deliver* any thing to the people, but what he had *received* from the Lord. The Prophets of the Lord ſtill delivered their Meſſages with this Preface *Hæc dicit Dominus.* Yea that wretch *Balaam*, though a falſe Prophet, and covetous enough, profeſſed yet that if *Balak* would give him his houſe full of ſilver and gold, he neither durſt nor would *goe beyond the word of the Lord to do leſs or more.* There is a great prone-

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1 Cor. 11. 23. & 15. 3.

Quod acceriſti, non quod excogitaſti. Vinc. Lirin. cap. 27.

Num. 22. 18.

nesse in us all to idolize *our own inventions*: Besides much *Ignorance*, *Hypocrisie*, and *Partiality*; any of which may byas us awry. Our *Educations* may lay such early anticipations upon our judgments; or our *teachers*, or the *bookes* we read, or the *society* we converse withall, may leave such impressions therein, as may fill them with prejudice, not easily to be removed. The *golden meane* is a hard thing to hit upon almost in any thing, without some warping toward one of *the extremes*, either on the right hand, or on the left: and without a great deal of wisdome and care seldome shall we seek to shun one *extreme*, and not run a little too farre towards the other, if not quite into it. In all which and sundry other respects, we may soon fall into gross mistakes and *errours*, if we do not take the more heed; whilst we suspect no such thing by our selves, but verily believe that all we do is out of pure zeale for Gods Glorie, and the *love* of his truth. We had need of all the *piety*, and *learning*, and *discretion*, and *paines*, and *prayers* we have: and all little enough without Gods *blessing* too, (ey and our own greater *care* too,) to keep us from running into *Errours*, and from *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*.

28. The *Third use* should be for *Admonition* also, to all the people of God, that they be not hasty to *believe every spirit*; *but to try the Spirits* (especially when they see the *spirits* to disagree and clash one with another, or find otherwise just cause of suspi-

1 Joh. 4.1. cion;)

cion;) and that, as the *Beræans* did, by the *Scriptures*. Uſing withall all good ſubſidiary helps for the better underſtanding thereof: eſpecially thoſe two as the principal; the Rule of *Right Reaſon*, and the known conſtant judgment and practice of the *Univerſal Church*. That ſo they may fanne away *the chaffe* from *the wheat*: and letting goe the refuſe, *hold faſt that which is good*. To this end, every man ſhould eſpecially beware, that he do not ſuffer himſelf to be carried away with *names*; nor to have any mans *perſon* either in *hatred* or *admiration*: but embrace what is conſonant to truth and reaſon, though *Judas* himſelf ſhould preach it; and reject what even an *Angel* from heaven ſhould teach, if he have no other reaſon to induce him to believe it, than that he teacheth it.

Act. 17. 11.

1 Theſſ. 5 21.

Jude 16.
Gal. 1. 8.
Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς πάντων ὑμῶν ἀφέντας τὸ δεῖνι καὶ τῷ δεῖνι δοκεῖν περὶ τούτων, παρὰ τῶν γεγραφῶν ταῦτα ἅπαντα φωνάς. Chryſ. Hom. 13 in 2. Corinth.

29. The *Fourth Uſe* ſhould be for *Exhortation* to the learneder ſort of my Brethren, to ſhew their faithfulneſs, duty, and true hearty affection to God and his Truth and Church, by mainteining the ſimplicity of the *Chriſtian Faith*, and aſſerting the doctrine of *Chriſtian Liberty*, againſt all corrupt mixtures of *mens inventions*, and againſt all unlawful impoſitions of *mens commandments*, in any kind whatſoever. If other men be zealous to ſet up *their own errors*, ſhall we be remiſs to hold up *Gods Truth*? God having *depoſited* it with us, and committed it to our ſpecial truſt: how ſhall we be able to anſwer it to God and the World, if we ſuffer it to be ſtolen out of the hearts of our people by our *ſilence* or neg-

leſt! Like enough you ſhall incurre blame and *cenſure* enough for ſo doing; as if you *ſought* but *your ſelves* in it, by ſeeking to pleaſe thoſe that are in authority in hope to get preferment thereby. But let none of theſe things diſcourage you: if you ſhall not be able by the grace of God in ſome meaſure to deſpice the *cenſures* of raſh and uncharitable men, ſo long as you can approve your hearts and actions in the ſight of God, and to break through (if need be) far greater *tryals* and *diſcouragements* than theſe; you are not worthy to be called *the ſervants of Chriſt.*

30. The *laſt Uſe* ſhould be an humble *Supplication* to thoſe that have in their hands the ordering of the great affairs of *Church* and *State*; That they would in their goodneſſe and wiſdomes make ſome ſpeedy and effectual proviſion, to repreſſe the exorbitant licentiouſneſſe of theſe times, in *printing* and *preaching* every man what he liſt: to the great diſhonour of *God*, ſcandal of the *Reformed Religion*, fomenting of *Superſtition* and *Errour*, and diſturbance of the peace both of *Church and Commonwealth*. Leſt if way be ſtill given thereunto, thoſe *evill ſpirits* that this late connivence hath raiſed, grow ſo fiecre within a while, that it will trouble all the power and wiſdom of the Kingdom to *conjure* them handſomly down again. But certainly, ſince we find by late experience, what *wildneſſe* in ſome of the Laypeople, what *petulancy* in ſome of the inferior Clergy, what *inſolency* in ſome both of the Laity and Clergy

Clergy, our Land is grown into, ſince the reines of the *Eccleſiaſtical Government* have layn a litle ſlack: we cannot but ſee, what need we have to deſire and pray, that the *Eccleſiaſtical Government* and *power* may be timely ſetled in ſome ſuch *moderate* and *effectual* way; as that it may not be either too much *abuſed* by them that are to exerciſe it, nor too much *deſpiſed* by thoſe that muſt live under it. In the mean time, ſo long as things hang thus looſe and unſetled, I know not better how to repreſent unto you the preſent face of the times in ſome reſpects, than in the words of the Prophet *Jeremy*, [*The Prophets propheſie lyes, and the Prieſts get power into their hands by their means, and my people love to have it ſo: And what will you do in the end thereof?* *Jerem.* 5. 31.

What the *end* of theſe inſolencies will be, God alone knoweth. The increaſe of *Profaneneſſe*, *Riot*, *Oppreſſion*, and all manner of wickedneſſe on the one ſide; and the growth of *Errour*, *Novelty*, and *Superſtition* on the other ſide: are no good ſignes onward. The Lord of his great mercy grant a better end thereunto, than either theſe beginnings or proceedings hitherto portend, or our ſins deſerve. And the ſame Lord of his infinite goodneſſe vouchſafe, To diſpell from us by the *light* of his Holy ſpirit all *blindeſſe and hardneſſe* of heart; To purge out of us by the *fire* of his Holy ſpirit all droſſe of *pride and hypocriſie*; To increaſe in us by the *grace* of his Holy ſpirit the love of *Truth and Godlineſſe*; To ſupport us by the *comforts* of his Holy ſpirit amidſt 32.

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all our *distresses and fears*; And to lead us by the *guidance* of his Holy spirit along the paths of *holyness* unto the ports of *happinesse*. And all this for the alone merits sake of his blessed Son and our alone Saviour *Jesus Christ*. To which blessed *Father, Son, and holy Spirit*, be ascribed by us and the whole Christian Church, all *the kingdom, the power, and the glory*, from this time forth for evermore. Amen, Amen.

FINIS.

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